

13 March 2022

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am writing in support of:

S.B. No. 387: AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE POLICY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE.

And I am writing in opposition to the following bills:

S.B. No. 365: AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORMS

S.B. No. 388: AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEFENSE OF A PERSON OR A PERSON'S DWELLING,
PLACE OF WORK OR MOTOR VEHICLE.

H.B. No. 5418: AN ACT REVISING JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE STATUTES AND INSURANCE

STATUTES CONCERNING THEFT OF A MOTOR VEHICLE

S.B. No. 392: AN ACT CONCERNING STATEMENTS MADE BY JUVENILES.

H.B. No. 5417: AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE JUSTICE AND SERVICES AND FIREARMS
BACKGROUND CHECKS.

S.B. No. 386: AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF THE JUVENILE DELINQUENCY LAWS OF THIS
STATE.

I am a resident of West Hartford and my Jewish congregation is part of the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA).

This issue is important to me because I'm afraid the policy changes being proposed would make things worse for children in our region without demonstrably improving public safety. I would hope that our legislation would proceed from a place of data and research about what is effective rather than from misplaced fear.

Connecticut has been a model in the country on how to successfully and safely reduce the juvenile justice system and expand diversion and services for youth. The legislation I oppose today is a departure from these practices. The legislation we oppose is a knee-jerk response to an unfounded misinformation campaign about a rise in crime in CT being committed by youth. It will set back efforts to advance criminal justice reform and services for youth. In some of the proposals, there are some items worth considering, but the helpful pieces of these legislative proposals should come through the Juvenile Justice and Policy Oversight Committee.

For instance, providing for GPS monitoring of juveniles is expensive, ineffective, and does not get to the root issue.

Allowing for automatic transfer to regular criminal docket for 14 year olds if charged with certain violent crimes: This is harmful because we don't believe a child that young should be in the adult system, as they are not built or equipped to serve children, and this is essentially rolling back the Raise the Age legislation that was passed in 2015-2016 (which has diverted many kids from the system and has nothing to do with the current climate of youth crime). It's important to know that if they did charge 14 year old as adults they'd be sent to Manson Youth Institute which DOJ concluded in December was in violation of civil and disability rights in terms of their conditions and services for young people

Establishing a committee to evaluate the criminal justice system for juveniles and adults. This effort to remove the JJPOC is wrong and should not be done. This the committee doesn't represent the people most directly impacted by its decisions. The JJPOC can and should do the job that is proposed for this group.

I oppose these legislative proposals, with the exception of SB 387 which comes out of the Juvenile Justice and Oversight Committee, through which all of these proposals should be vetted. The other bills appear to be rooted in a misinformation campaign and lack sound analysis and will lead to more of our youth becoming system-involved, without much of a benefit to public safety.

Our GHIAA congregations stand ready to defeat policies that are rooted in racist rhetoric and faulty data. To learn more watch this 7 minute video on GHIAA's position:

<https://vimeo.com/686784926>

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth Rose".

Elizabeth Rose
4 Frederick Road
West Hartford CT 06119